

crucial in ensuring the growth needed in the region. Only with such growth can we hope to realize and sustain a more stable and prosperous Middle East. In addition, the Bank will help ensure that qualified individuals, often trained in the United States, will remain in the region and contribute to its growth.

We look forward to working closely with you and your staff in our continuing efforts to gather support for the MENABank. Thank you again for your help with this critical initiative.

Sincerely,

BARBARA LARKIN,
Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs.

NOTES ON H.R. 856

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 1998

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, before this House votes on H.R. 856, I want to inform my colleagues of a very recent development concerning one of the status options.

One of the most controversial issues in this legislation is the exclusion of an autonomy option that satisfies Puerto Ricans and that complies with the strict criteria of constitutional constraints and public policy imperatives.

Under H.R. 856, Puerto Ricans that do not favor either independence or statehood are forced to opt from the equally undesired extremes of plenary territorial subordination or a free association formula that is really so undefined that it is practically indistinguishable from full independence.

We must offer the people of Puerto Rico fair and realistic options that are clearly and fully defined. That being the case, I want to bring to the attention of this House a proposal that has recently been circulated in Washington and Puerto Rico.

This proposal calls for the development of the present status into a relationship of autonomy within the context of a Treaty of Union between Puerto Rico and the United States. It has been suggested by former Puerto Rico Senate and Popular Democratic Party President, Miguel Hernández Agosto. Many of you may know Senator Hernández Agosto as the person in charge of the pro-commonwealth party during the 1993 plebiscite which they won.

The Treaty of Union proposal has been endorsed or welcomed in Puerto Rico by prominent pro-commonwealth leaders like the Mayors of Ponce, Carolina, Caguas, San Juan and various other civic groups and legislators.

This proposal represents a fresh approach in the attempt to develop commonwealth into a fuller measure of self-government that is compatible with continued ties to the U.S.

This association would operate under a nation-to-nation agreement that will encapsulate, among others, the defense, common market, citizenship and currency provisions that are so relevant to both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. It also permits Puerto Rico to retain and affirm its distinct culture and linguistic identity.

I sincerely hope that if discussion on political status moves forward, Congress will have the opportunity to properly and seriously analyze this deserving and innovative approach.

AMENDMENT #4 (Autonomy Definition)

P. 12, Sec. 4: Strike out completely page 12 and in lieu thereof insert the following: A. Autonomy—if you agree, mark here_____

The people of Puerto Rico, in the exercise of its natural right, and of its free will as the source of all political power, do hereby establish an autonomous body politic in union with the United States of America under a treaty which cannot be altered unilaterally and subject to the following:

(1) Puerto Rico will control and determine its own nationality and citizenship, provided that the United States citizens born in Puerto Rico will retain such citizenship, unless they voluntarily renounce it, and will be entitled to the same rights and privileges as any other United States citizen.

(2) Puerto Rico will have the authority and responsibility for its internal and external affairs, including, but not limited to, language, olympic and diplomatic representation, customs, enter into agreements to foster its economic development by joining regional and international trade agreements. Puerto Rico may enter into tax-sparring agreements with other nations which may have an effect on its economy similar to the 936 provision of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, recently abolished. The United States will encourage and support the participation of Puerto Rico in such regional and international organizations.

(3) The United States and Puerto Rico will exchange diplomatic representations and will maintain continuous and friendly consultations with the purpose of achieving concerted actions on foreign affairs.

(4) A common market will exist between Puerto Rico and the United States which would permit free flow of persons, goods, and services between both nations.

(5) The United States will maintain its authority and responsibility over defense matters. This would include:

(a) Responsibility for the defense of Puerto Rico and its people in the same manner as to the United States and its people.

(b) The United States, at its option, may deny or limit access of any foreign power of facilities in Puerto Rico.

(c) The United States, at its option, may own and maintain in Puerto Rico the military bases or installations presently operating in Puerto Rico under the terms of specific agreements.

(d) Any Additional needs will be considered and agreed upon on separate and specific accords.

(6) Except for property needed for defense purposes, all other property under Federal Ownership will be transferred to Puerto Rico.

(7) The official U.S. currency will be the official currency of Puerto Rico and all Federal applicable laws are made part of the compact.

(8) With the purpose of assisting the government of Puerto Rico to promote the economic well being of its people and in recognition of the special present and future relations between Puerto Rico and the United States, the United States will provide a block grant in an amount at least equal to the amounts provided to the government of Puerto Rico. Individuals will maintain federal entitlements such as social security, veterans benefits, and others on the same basis as at present.

(9) Except for currency and defense, federal laws will cease to apply to Puerto Rico, unless otherwise agreed, effective on the date in which this compact becomes effective.

(10) Any dispute as to the interpretation of this compact which cannot be resolved by negotiation between the parties, can be re-

ferred by any party to a special Court on the U.S. Puerto Rico Compact, which will be created by separate agreements.

Comments: All the formulas should be free and independent one from the other, and not juxtapositioned one with the other as the case of independence and Free Association. The Free Association alternative should be defined in clearer terms, than what the bill does. If it is carefully studied, you will see that the independence and the statehood definitions, are spell out, but Autonomy or Free Association is not. As the bill is a this moment, U.S. Citizenship is only featured in the statehood alternative as a way to obtain more votes in the possible Referendum. There is no legal restriction to feature U.S. Citizenship in Autonomy or Free Association; and, additionally, since Puerto Ricans have had the citizenship for the last 80 years and there has been no problems we believe that the two alternatives should run on a equal footing.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR. NANCY DICKEY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 1998

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to briefly express my congratulations, encouragement and best wishes to Dr. Nancy Dickey of College Station, Texas, who in June, will take office as the first female president of the American Medical Association. The AMA is this country's most active, notable and influential group of physicians, a group that lends its expertise and experience to America's state and federal legislators, as well as our doctors and the families that they care for. I have always said that when shaping public policy dealing with medicine and health care reform, well-intentioned Members of Congress must hear the vital voices of our medical practitioners.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Nancy Dickey has a long history with Congress of lending her expertise and experience to us as we have considered and deliberated on the important health care issues of the day. In addition to giving over 200 speeches addressing women's issues and encouraging more young women to pursue a career in medicine, she has testified at Congressional hearings at least 10 times.

She has traveled to the nation's capital to speak on the many various issues of health insurance and medical ethics, while maintaining a busy practice as a family physician and program director for the Brazos Valley Family Practice Program at Texas A&M University. Mr. Speaker, Dr. Dickey has displayed conviction and concern for the practicing of medicine, expending tremendous energy on every endeavor she undertakes. That is why I believe it is truly fitting that she will soon be sworn in as president of the AMA, since she will be able to use that energy to lead an organization of more than 700,000 of our country's most gifted and influential doctors.

Dr. Dickey hails from Watertown, South Dakota and is a resident of College Station, but her vision and passion encompass the entire country and reflects her commitment to represent all of America's doctors and address the problems and challenges that both doctors and patients face.